



More Than a Number by Tif S

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Summary: AU: Eleanor aka Eleven aka Ele is a girl who's had a rough hand dealt to her. Mike Wheeler is an outspoken young man who would much rather spend an afternoon at the arcade and playing dungeons and dragons than speak to a girl, but after his best friend is hurt by his father and Jim Hopper takes in a new foster kid, Mike's world is turned upside down. Mileven, Joyce/Jim Jancy

1. Chapter 1

A/N: Hello, well jumping into a new fandom, well not entirely new, my first time writing for it. Well anyway, I started watching Stranger Things when it first came out, season one to be exact, so last year, fell in love with it and began reading fics like crazy to tide myself over until season 2. I finished season 2 yesterday and well, this plot bunny hit me about three episodes into season 2, but I finally got chapter one finished today. A bit about the idea. Major AU: there is no Will getting trapped in the upside down, it's pretty well grounded. All of the kids are present, although the major focus will be on Will, Mike and Eleven, including some characters introduced in season 2, but as this is AU there will be no major plot details as it pertains to their role in the show itself. They will simply be playing their role in this version of Hawkins. As for Eleven and her abilities, well that is to be determined. If there is enough interest in Eleven having her powers, I am definitely open to working it in. TW: For references to abuse and dark themes.

I do not own Stranger Things, that belongs to Netflix and the Duffer Brothers. I'm simply playing in the sandbox. I only own my plot.

Chapter One: Before

Mike's POV

"Come on, come on, fireball Will!" Lucas and I banged on the table. We were sitting around the table in the middle of an important campaign. We'd been planning it for months, and now Will, Dustin, Lucas and I were face to face with the Demogorgon.

"Cast protection! Fireball will never work." Dustin reasoned. "Oh shit..."

"Fireball!" It looked as though Will was deciding to cast fireball. He shook the dice with a dramatic pause before he tossed them.

We scrambled as the dice went flying hoping that Will had rolled a thirteen or higher.

"Where are they?" Dustin asked.

"Is it thirteen?" Will asked.

"Where's the last one?" Lucas was under the table searching as I grabbed a die from the bottom of the stairs.

"Boys, it's six o'clock." Mom's voice came from the staircase as I looked up. "School tomorrow."

"Come on Mom," I sighed. "We're in the middle of the campaign, we have to find out if Will the Wise killed the Demogorgon."

"Well, I'm sure the Delamorgan will still be there tomorrow." Mom said.

"Demogorgon Mrs. Wheeler." Lucas said.

"Whatever it is, regardless, you have school tomorrow and Jonathan is on his way."

"But Mrs. Wheeler..." Dustin protested.

"No arguments."

"Sorry Mrs. Wheeler." Dustin and Lucas apologized. They then turned to us. "See you guys tomorrow."

Will and I looked at each other from across the room. I noticed he was the only one that wasn't trying to start an argument. Will was just like that though, always had been. Parents liked him.

"Alright." Will said. He looked at Dustin and Lucas. "I think it was a seven, the Demogorgon got me."

"Not cool." Lucas frowned. "We'll solve it tomorrow. No worries."

"I know." Will nodded.

"Still sucks though." Dustin said.

"Dustin language."

"Sorry Mrs. Wheeler." Dustin ran up the stairs shouting the apology quickly.

Lucas, Will and I laughed.

"Tomorrow then?" Lucas said

"Tomorrow." Will replied.

Eleven's POV

I've only ever heard my name twice. *Eleanor Jane Brenner*, once when I was in serious trouble from Papa, and once from my social worker when she dropped me off at the group home. Once I got into the group home, I got my new name, Eleven. I was the eleventh kid in the house, and the woman that owned the house was always drunk. She couldn't keep track of names so we all got numbers. There was another girl. She was eighth. Eight was the one who put up a fight. She set the house on fire, and then we split up. I don't know where she ended up, but I was sent to Hawkins with Billy and Max. That's how I ended up locked in the bedroom without dinner.

I got along alright with Max. As far as foster sisters went, she wasn't as crazy as Eight, and her mother was alright too. It would've went well if it weren't for the fact that Max's mother worked all the time and we were stuck with Billy. Billy treated me okay at first, other than teasing me about my name, but then he started wanting things from me, things that hurt.

I decided not to give him what he wanted, and then he hit me and locked the door. It's been four hours. He locked the door at two zero zero. It's six zero zero. Max's mother gets home at eight zero zero.

"Eleven..." I heard a whisper through the crack in the bottom of the door. "Eleven..."

I crawled over and peeked through the crack. Max peeked back at me and then began working the lock with a hair pin.

"What are you doing?" I backed away from the door. My stomach got butterflies. "You're going to get in trouble."

"Screw that." Max said. "We're getting out of here."

We snuck out of the window, both wearing sweatshirts that Max had stolen from Billy's closet. I put up the hood as the chill of the fall weather bit through my clothes, even the sweatshirt that was four sizes too big.

"Where are we going?" I tugged at the sleeves hugging myself in an effort to warm up as we ran.

"There's a general store not far from here, Melvald's I think." Max said.

I frowned. I hadn't seen her with any money, unless it had been in her pocket.

"Would you relax?" Max said. "We need supplies."

"Supplies?"

"Uh...yeah. Otherwise we'll wind up eating each other." Max laughed. But I couldn't. Running away was bad enough, but going to the store without money... I gave a half grin, but it probably didn't look like one. This was bad for both of us.

We stopped in front of the store around twenty minutes later. It looked small enough, fit in pretty well with the rest of this town. Small could be bad news.

"Ele, come on." Max whispered jamming an elbow into my side. "Let's go."

2. Chapter 2

A/N: Hello, well chapter two is ready. We hear from all three Byers. And your votes are in, and I hope you like how I worked in Eleven's powers. :) A bit of mischief on Will and Mike's end among other things. Hope you enjoy. As usual I do not own Stranger Things, belongs to Netflix and the Duffer Brothers, just having a bit of fun.

Chapter Two: Moments That Make Trouble

Will's POV

"Will, Will, Will!" I jolted as Mike called me. "Where were you just now?"

I didn't answer, choosing instead to shake my head. Waiting for Jonathan was always double edged. A black hole. "Just trying to form a bet."

"A bet?" That had worked, gotten Mike's attention. "What kind?"

"I'll bet you a choice of any comic book that Jonathan will walk in on Nancy and Steve."

Mike scoffed. "No way, that won't happen." He blinked. "Right?"

I grinned as I headed for the stairs. "Don't get too attached to your X-Men."

If I was lucky, this would stall having to go home for at least a little longer.

"Bullshit." Mike quipped, but I'd gotten under his skin. I could tell by the way his shoes scuffed the steps. "You're on."

We went upstairs jostling each other the whole way. Jonathan was waiting in the living room talking to Mrs. Wheeler.

"Hey Will, Mike, how was the campaign?"

"The Demogorgon got me." I shrugged.

"No way, it couldn't have." Jonathan raised an eyebrow.

"It did." Mike said. "We couldn't finish."

"School night Michael. Don't whine please." Mrs. Wheeler said.

Mike held back his reply rolling his eyes instead.

"It's okay." I said. "It was a bad roll."

"Well, there's always next time." Jonathan roughed my hair. "Right?"

"Right." I said.

Jonathan then looked at me. "You ready?"

"Um...actually I think I left something in Mike's room." I said. I then went upstairs as Mike followed and we tried to hide our laughter. Mike closed the door a crack as we waited.

"You're out of your mind, there's no possible way." Mike whispered. "Your brother can't be that crazy."

"Not crazy," I shook my head then made a motion like a camera. "He just likes a good picture."

"What does that mean?" Mike made a face.

I shushed him as I heard feet on the steps and we backed up slightly.

Jonathan's POV

Will and Mike had been upstairs a long time. How long did it take Will to find something he'd forgotten, not this long. Will was normally quick about these sorts of things. I looked over to Mrs. Wheeler. "Uh...I think I should go see if everything's okay."

Mrs. Wheeler nodded. "Of course. Go right ahead."

I walked upstairs in the direction of Mike's room. As I walked past Nancy's door, I saw that it was open a crack. Steve Harrington and

Nancy were seated on the bed together studying for the chemistry test, though it didn't appear that they were getting much studying done. Steve moved a lock of Nancy's hair, and I saw her smiling up at him. There was something different about how she looked in that moment.

Running purely out of habit, I grabbed my camera from around my neck and took a photo. And that's when I heard the laughter, the boys' laughter.

"You've gotta be kidding me." Steve apparently heard it as well turning toward the door, rising to his feet and moving in my direction..

"Steve, what's wrong?" Nancy glanced over, and I felt my face flame.

"Byers."

And suddenly Will was beside me looking up at Steve. "I was taking too long." He said.

I looked over to Will, but decided to save any sort of questions about his and Mike's private joke for the car.

"Jonathan..." Nancy walked over beside Steve. "How are you?"

"Hey Nancy,," I said. "Just picking up Will here."

"And leaving, right Byers?" Steve said stepping closer.

Will gripped my arm.

"Yeah, leaving." I said. I tried to stop myself from reacting. It was only Steve Harrington plus my kid brother was barely a foot away. I turned my attention to Will. "Ready Bud?"

"Yeah." Will said. "Bye Nancy." Will then turned toward the direction of Mike's bedroom where Mike had been watching outside his door. "See you later Mike."

"Later." Mike waved.

Joyce's POV

I was working a late shift. I only hope Jonathan had picked up Will and not left it to Lonnie. For the most part, at this time the store was made up of a skeleton crew which included myself and Donald and a few regular customers. Two girls I recognized from the middle school walked in and began browsing.

"Good evening ladies." I greeted.

There was no answer from the girls. I then noticed as one of them pocketed a bag of chips.

I noticed she didn't make a move toward my direction. Well, this wasn't good. I moved slowly in the direction of the phone.

The second girl, the one with shorter hair had her eyes on me. It was a bit unsettling.

"Ele,let's get out of here." I saw the first girl pull the other by the hand. I reached for the phone, as suddenly it was pulled forcibly from my hand and clanged into the cradle. I gripped my hand rubbing it quickly before attempting to reach for the phone again.

"No." The girl said. She pulled her hand away.

"Ele..." The girl now looked concerned, jittery looking from the door to her friend.

"No!" I had grabbed the phone and dialed Hopper as the girl now screamed. "Go!" She pushed the other girl toward the door.

"Hello..."

"Hopper, it's Joyce...Joyce Byers. I'm, I'm at the store and these girls are—!"

The phone receiver suddenly flies out of my hand and shatters against the wall.

I can hear the dial tone, a resounding noise even as I feel the blood in my ears. Blood...the girl's nose is dripping with it. I notice the girl's

friend is frozen in place as the sound of glass breaking causes screams from the few customers in the shop.

I wonder how long it will take the police to get here, and I wonder if I will make it home to my boys.

A/N: This chapter gave me a bit of a run around, I'm not going to lie. Friends don't right, but I hope I piqued your interest.

Next up: The Byers boys go home and trouble is waiting, as back at Melvald's the fallout .

Let me know if there's anything you'd like to see.

3. Crash and Clash

A/N: Hey, well finally got my muse back for this story, and this chapter was nearly half finished when I looked at it, so I decided to finish it. :) Stranger Things Season 3 is almost here guys! Anyway this is where things start picking up. Anyway, I do not own Stranger Things, that belongs to the Duffer Brothers and Netflix, just my plot idea. Oh, brief warning for some stronger language and violence not of the scifi variety in this chapter.

Chapter Three: Crash and Clash

Hopper's POV

Getting called in on my day off. It's not exactly how I want to spend my Thursday evening, but a call from Joyce. That...it isn't unusual. Her call getting cut off so abruptly, and not by me trying to calm her down, well *that* was unusual.

"Robbery in progress at Melvald's chief." I hear through the radio

"I'm on my way there now." I replied. Melvald's was a pretty small place, one robbery suspect I could handle.

I pulled into the parking lot about ten minutes later. The whole store looks blown in. The windows are basically non-existent as the glass lays in fragments on the floor. Two girls stand in the middle of the chaos, one looking dead on her feet even suffering a bloody nose, but I notice that the most destruction seems to be near her.

Customers are trembling and upon my arrival seem to deem it safe to exit the premises. They look terrified. There are only so many customers that frequent Melvald's. I can get their names from Joyce and their statements soon enough. My main concern right now are the two kids and Joyce.

"What happened?"

One of the girls wordlessly places a bag of chips on the counter at the

same moment the other girl passes out.

"Jesus Christ!" Working on instinct, I crouch down and cup the girl's head before it can crack open on the tile. I then look to her companion. "What is she anemic or something?"

"I...I don't think so. It started when she..." The girl makes a motion that I can't decipher a waving of hands and a pantomime of slamming something maybe?

I then look to Joyce and then to the broken phone receiver. "Did she attack you?"

The girl's companion looks affronted at the accusation, but I'm just covering my bases. I don't see how this girl can assault anyone. She's just a slip of a thing and she fainted.

"Uh...no...no I think she was just scared." Joyce said. "She didn't...do anything physically."

"Physically?" I look between Joyce and the girl's friend. "What is she psychic or something?"

"Or something..." The girl's friend says ducking her gaze down.

I shake my head, disbelieving. "Alright, whatever this is, I'd feel better if we get her to a hospital. Do you know her parents' contact information?"

"No!" She shouts. "You can't."

"Can I at least get your name?" I look at the girl.

"Max, but I'm serious. You can't they can't...he'll *kill* us! Just, just let us go please."

I shake my head again. "Can't do that sweetheart. It's either the hospital or the station." I couldn't just let these kids go. They were minors, minors who'd vandalized a general store.

"Ele hates hospitals." Max says. "I don't know why, but you can't take her there. It'll probably end up worse than this place."

The girl then began stirring.

"Max, sweetheart," Joyce walks out from behind the counter. "I think your friend needs to see a doctor. Her nose was bleeding."

"It always does that. She's fine. My parents can't know. She'll..she'll have to leave." Max blinked.

"Leave?" I look over.

"She doesn't have parents, not good ones. She's my foster sister." Foster sister, so the kid's in the system? I try not to let myself wonder too much, wonder vaguely about that paperwork that's sitting on my coffee table back home.

"M...Max..." The girl's eyes open as she scampers backwards out of my grasp. I notice a deep scrape on her hand as she wrenches away.

"Ele, it's okay." Max places a hand on her shoulder.

"Who...are you?" The girl looks up at me with narrowed eyes taking in my uniform. "Cop?"

"Chief actually, Jim Hopper." I introduce. "This town's too small for us to be called cops."

The girl's eyes further narrow in confusion. I guess my joke wasn't that funny.

"Alright yeah, cop." I settle. "But you're not in trouble."

"Not?" The girl's gaze travels from me then to Joyce, then to the shattered telephone.

"No, you're not, but you did bang yourself up pretty good." I said. "Do you know anyone I can call that can meet us at the hospital?"

The girl begins to shake her head furiously. "No, no hospital. Please..." The girl's voice trembles and I see her whole body shaking.

I frown. This girl is scared right out of her mind. "It'll be alright Kid," I try to reassure. "I promise."

The girl then stares me down for several seconds before she sniffs and nods her head, utterly defeated. A girl this age reacting like this, that doesn't sit right with me. And I'm gonna get to the bottom of it.

I go over to Joyce leaving the girls to talk amongst themselves.

"You need help?" Joyce asks.

"No," I shake my head. "You get home to your boys." I said. "I'll call you when we need the rest of your statement." It had been a long while, but there was something about this girl, that made me feel like I could maybe dig up some old paternity if only to make these hospital tests run smooth.

Jonathan's POV

"So, you let me risk a black eye from Steve Harrington for Mike's X-Men?" I scoff as we pull into the driveway.

Wil ducks his head as his hands fold in front of him. "Sorry,"

I notice that my kid brother seems genuinely nervous so I'm quick to act. I reach an arm over and pull him to me roughing his hair. "Relax, it was a good one." I grin. "But try not to poke in again."

"You could take Steve with one hand." Will says.

"With what, my camera?"

"It'd be documented." Will points out.

"Dork," I open the car door.

Will hesitates, but after a while opens his own door. We never quite know what we'll be walking into, and because of the bet, we were a whole twenty minutes later than I told Dad we'd be.

As usual, no one is in the kitchen when we walk in the back door, but I do notice that the fridge door is partially ajar, a side effect of slamming when grabbing drinks. I push it shut the rest of the way.

"Boys, that you?" Dad's voice is sleepy, a sure sign he's already had too many.

"Yeah Dad, it's us." I reply.

"Grab me another beer would ya?"

I pull open the fridge that I'd just closed and grab a can. Will looks at me. He may have only been twelve, but he knew what slurring sounded like. This was something Mom wanted me to protect him from. And since she was still working, I would do my best.

"Hasn't he had enough?" Will pulled me back.

"That's up to him," I reply simply.

"But..." Will's voice is barely a whisper.

"Hey," I place the can on top of the open door and place my free hand on Will's shoulder. "Here's what you're gonna do. I got a new tape upstairs. Go up in my room. Shut the door and turn on the radio loud as you can make it like we always do yeah? I'll be up soon as I can, swear it." I grab the can and close the fridge.

Will nods.

We then go into the living room.

"Bout time. What took you so long?" Dad is seated on the old chair, unsurprisingly, several cans already littering the side table. He wobbles unsteadily to his feet. "Leaving get you too upset Boy?" Dad's gaze moves to Will just as he's making his way to the stairs.

Will shakes his head quickly not answering in words and not stopping his path.

"Dad, come on!" I say. "It's not..."

"You stop and look at me when I'm talking to you!" Dad shouts. "Grow a backbone for Chrissake." What happens then happens almost entirely too fast. Even with photos from my camera, I wouldn't even be sure I'm seeing what I'm seeing properly. Dad reaches his hand out

wrenching Will's arm as he spins him around, but Will being already up the steps can't keep his balance. He's falls and all I hear is a sickening crack. Somehow, somehow he manages to catch himself and scramble up the steps. Dad's either in some kind of shock or too drunk to react. As for me, I'm seeing much too much red to provide any kind of comfort to Will. I hear a slam, my bedroom door I can assume, loud yet muffled sounds through the door and then I deem it okay to speak assuming the Clash will drown out what is about to happen.

"What the *hell*?"

"You watch your tone, hear me?" Dad turns himself back around to face me.

"What was that for huh?" I continue. "He said no. He answered you."

"Your brother needs to toughen himself up. Looked as though he was gonna piss himself."

I scoff. Dad could never give Will a chance to just be him. Could never give either of us a chance at that come to think of it. "Can you blame him?"

Dad doesn't answer me just mumbling under his breath as he goes toward the kitchen. I hear the sound of the keys jangling and the door opening.

I follow.

"Dad!" I reach the screen door only to have it slam in my face. I then heard the sound of the car engine starting Great, my dad was drunk and leaving, and my little brother was upstairs probably hurt.

I go to the phone and dial the sheriff's station. Dad was a bastard, but I didn't need to have him hurting someone else in my head right now.

A/N: So, yeah...that happened. Lonnie hurt Will and left and is now driving round Hawkins drunk, but Jonathan called the sheriff's station. And Hopper will be accompanying Eleven and Max to the hospital as Joyce is preparing to make her way home. Next chapter:

Jonathan goes to check on his brother as Hopper brings the girls to the hospital and sees just exactly what sort of family the Mayfield-Hargroves are.

4. Repercussions

A/N: Hey guys, here with chapter four. This took a slightly different turn than I expected, but I don't think that it's a bad one. Wanted to add a bit of well, I guess it could be considered some tension breaking but I'll let you decide. As usual Stranger Things doesn't belong to me at all, belongs to the Duffer Brothers and Netflix. I'm just a fan playing in the sandbox. I'll put it back how I found it. Anyway, enjoy.

Chapter Four: Repercussions

Eleven's POV

I went with Max to the chief's car, Max keeping a grip on my arm. We slid into the back seat.

My foot ends up on something soft. I bend down and pick it up. It looks like a bunny. It's furry and its ears are floppy. It's not new. I wonder what it's doing down here, but it's only a fleeting thought. I hug it to myself and feel at least a bit better about having to go to the hospital. If Max notices, she doesn't say anything. I wonder what's going to happen now.

We pull up to the hospital and I shrink back in the seat. The chief gets out and comes to the back. "Alright, you two," He looks between us and I notice his expression changes as he sees the bunny in my arms. Did I do something wrong?

"Sorry," I say. I go to put the bunny on the seat, but I wish I could take it with. I then go to slide out of the seat after Max.

"Wait a sec," I see the chief has the bunny in his hand. "I...I think you're forgetting something."

I blink looking down at the bunny.

"You just gonna stare at it?"

"Sorry," I repeat. I take it in one hand.

He gives me a funny look scoffing slightly. "No big deal Kid, let's go."

I'm tempted to hold my breath as we go in. The chief walks to the giant counter and begins talking to the lady behind it.

"Ele," Max looks at me grabbing my hand quickly. "Holy crap, does that hurt?"

"No," I reply but it comes out more like a hiss. I study Max and notice the scrape on her cheek. "Does that?" I point to the spot.

"You must be some kind of robot or something." Max releases my hand. "Honestly," She reaches up and touches the spot. "Hell yes."

"Neil isn't gonna be happy."

"He never is," Max rolls her eyes.

"Billy isn't either."

"Mom and Neil will deal with him first, you've got time." Max looks to me, but she's talking really fast and softer than usual like she's going to cry.

We both know I don't.

Will's POV

I don't know what to do. I'm trying to listen to the music, but I'm paying too much attention to the door. My arm is burning and my head hurts. I'm not sure if its actual pain or if I'm just upset. Dad didn't even ask me about the campaign. Not that he ever has, but I thought maybe he would tonight.

Should I stay or should I go now?

It's funny. Jonathan always says that music helps, and it really does tonight. I stand up and begin moving to the song trying not to think about what had just happened, but I find even as I try to nod to the beat I end up grabbing my head in a sudden wave of dizziness.

"You like it?" I hear Jonathan. "Will! You okay?"

I blink and look over. "It's great," I say.

Jonathan turns down the radio and looks at me. Great. "What's going on?"

"It kinda hurts, my arm..." I decide against even trying to fake it. Jonathan wasn't Dad. "More than kinda actually..."

"Christ..." Jonathan sighs. "Can I see?"

I move it and feel myself beginning to cry. Great.

"I..I'm sorry." I hurry to wipe my face with my other hand. "I'm stupid."

"Will, stop." Jonathan says. "That's not true."

Dad said so when I fell off my bike and cut my knee and cried then. He'd just say it again when he comes up here and finds me crying.

Jonathan puts a hand to his head and lets out a breath. "Okay, okay, so I'm gonna help you downstairs and then I'm gonna call Mrs. Wheeler alright? Have Mike's Dad drive us to the hospital."

"O....okay..." I only consider the fact that Jonathan mentions calling Mike's mom instead of just driving himself for about a second. It hurts too bad. "B...but what are you gonna tell Dad?"

Jonathan shakes his head but doesn't answer crouching down. "Alright, ready?"

I nod as I stand up and lean against Jonathan for support. We then go downstairs. I notice there's no sign of Dad when he brings me to the living room. I sit on the couch and wait for him to call.

Nancy's POV

I hear the phone ring as Mike and I are doing the dishes after dinner. Mom's getting Holly ready for bed and dad is in the living room. I'm

closest so I dry my hands on a towel and pick it up. "Wheeler residence."

"Nancy," I'm surprised to hear Jonathan Byers on the phone, and by the sound of his tone, he's just as surprised to hear me. But there's something else...I just have a feeling this is about something other than homework considering they left just a little while ago.

He's not saying anything. "Jonathan? Are you still there?"

"Uh...sorry," After a long pause he speaks again. *"Are your parents around? Mom's not home yet and Will's hurt. Dad sorta took the car."*

I barely have time to process what Jonathan is saying, how he's saying it, before my little brother is in front of me waving a wet dishcloth.

"Nancy, you're supposed to dry, hello...."

"Phone," I roll my eyes and turn to Mike.

"Can't you plan another date later?"

"It's not Steve geek,"

"Who is it?"

"Just....go bug Mom or something."

"Sorry I'll try Mom at the store, maybe she hasn't left yet. I just...."

"No I'm sorry, my little brother is being *annoying*." I shoot a glare at Mike who sticks his tongue out. "I'll go see if Dad can come by. Tell Will to hang in there."

I notice Mike still waiting but his eyes go wide at the mention of his friend. I decide this can give Mike something to do. "Alright you want to know who I'm on the phone with?" I tell him. "Talk to Jonathan." I then turn my attention back to Jonathan on the phone. "I'm giving the phone to Mike. I have to see where Dad is."

"Uh Nancy, *what—?*" I hand the phone to my little brother.

I went into the living room to see Dad on his La-Z Boy. "Dad,"

"Oh, Nancy," He looks over and notices my face. "What's wrong?"

I explain the situation or what Jonathan told me. "Mrs. Byers isn't home yet and it seems serious."

"I'll get the keys. Let your mother know."

"Thank you Daddy."

Max's POV

Unfortunately, the hospital called my parents.

I just got stitches for my cut and I hear my parents talking.

"I told you this was a bad idea Susan. It hasn't even been a month this girl has been with us and trouble already."

"I see your point Neil, but she's only a child. How much trouble could she possibly cause after this? Having the police called, that's enough to frighten her a bit."

"We're having difficulty enough with Billy and Maxine. I can't, I can't see how this was a good idea. With our family going through all of these changes, having to adjust to a new town, it isn't practical. She's trouble. That's all there is to it!"

"Neil," Mom looks over to the hospital bed. "Maxine is asleep, she's had a long few hours. I see your point, but now isn't the time."

I close my eyes tighter against the words. At least they think I'm asleep. But I know what this means. Ele is getting kicked out.

A/N: So Eleven found something interesting in Hopper's car in the form of a toy bunny, Jonathan found out Will's arm is more seriously hurt and reached out to the Wheelers, Mike and Nancy had some sibling bickering but Nancy did get her father to go to the Byers'. And Max overheard her parents deciding that Ele living with them is not the best option. I am taking some liberties with Ted

*Wheeler's character He will be a *bit more in tune as will Mrs. Wheeler, but it won't ruin the kids' fun I promise.*

Next chapter: Ele's experience getting treated as Hopper notices the girl's foster brother is not the most comforting and steps in, Mike weasels his way into going with his father to help the Byers' brothers as Joyce sees something unacceptable on her way home among other things.

Please let me know your thoughts.

5. Aid

A/N: Well, this chapter took a slightly different direction. The focus is on Eleven and Hopper. This is a pretty big moment so I figured it deserved its own chapter. But I haven't forgotten about Mike and the Byers. They will appear next chapter. Happy Almost Stranger Things 3 Day! Hope you enjoy. As usual, I own nothing but my plot. These characters and Stranger Things belong to Netflix and the Duffer Brothers. If it were mine it wouldn't be nearly as awesome.

Chapter Five: Aid

Hopper's POV

They set up the girl in a room and I notice the teenage boy with her does not seem the least bit interested in providing comfort. The girl holds the toy bunny I gave her close. *Sara's* bunny not even saying a word to the boy beside her.

"Chief Hopper," A nurse comes over. "A word if you don't mind..." I notice the woman looks concerned. I take one last look over to the hospital bed. This whole situation gives me a backwards feeling but I'd done my part. The girl was with a family member. Nothing more I could do about it.

"Yes Ma'am of course." I follow the woman out into the hallway. I see that a couple and another man were waiting out in the hallway.

"We're so sorry, we hope Eleanor and Maxine didn't cause you any trouble." The woman speaks.

"Not at all Mrs..." I raise an eyebrow.

"Hargroves, Susan Hargroves,"

"Mrs. Hargroves," I shake my head. "It was a misunderstanding that's all."

"When we took Eleanor in, we didn't think she would be this erratic." The man beside Susan says. "We had just moved to Hawkins a month

before and adjusting to being a blended family well you know..."

"Can't say so Mr. Hargroves," I deadpan. They didn't think taking in a foster child with all of that was going to be *erratic* as he so bluntly put it?

"I see," Mr. Hargroves says. "But anyway, I really do wish there was another way to handle this."

I didn't like the sound of that. But I turn my attention to the man on Susan's other side who had cleared his throat.

"Chief Hopper, my name is Benny Hammond. I'm with child services. I'm Eleanor's social worker."

Benny Hammond offers his hand. I shake it, but as I do I feel something, as though I'd been sucker punched in the gut. And I can't be cordial about this.

"So you're just going to throw this girl out like yesterday's trash?"

"Chief Hopper, please just..." The nurse catches my eye, but I can't keep myself calm. Not here, not when the situation is...impossibly too close for my own comfort. Seeing a little girl in one of these rooms again, even if it's just for stitches, knowing that even though she's not terminal her situation is just as terrible...I can't remain calm when parents are taking it for granted.

"We are doing no such thing." Mr. Hargroves says. "And our family matters aren't your concern Chief Hopper. We appreciate you notifying us about Maxine and Eleanor, but I would appreciate you minding your place."

"Yeah you would wouldn't you?" I whisper close enough for the man to hear. I then turn back around ignoring the nurse's call as I go back to the girl's room. I'm just about to enter when I see the teenager grasping the girl's wrist.

Eleven's POV

"Alright Sweetheart," I see the nurse come over and I shrink backwards. My eyes search out Billy's. It's instinct. I don't know why.

I should know better. But hospitals always remind me of school and Papa's tests. Those nurses and doctors never listened to me. And even though Papa was trying to be comforting, it was still more scary than anything. "In a little while, I'm going to set you up with an IV. It'll just be a tiny pinch. Nothing to be scared of."

I let out a whimper and squeeze the bunny tight.

"I'll give you a few minutes." The nurse looks between the two of us and then leaves with the chief.

"Fuck's wrong with you?" Billy says when they're gone, not looking at me.

"Scared," I say softly.

"Oh, that's it?" He says. "Scared?" I look over, surprised by the softness. He almost looks concerned.

I nod.

He holds out his hand. I raise my eyebrows but I take it. Maybe he was trying to help. But then suddenly he pulls me over hard by the wrist. I gasp in pain.

"I got news for you: nobody cares," He says. "I don't care. That little stunt you and Max pulled, that's the *last one*. You're gonna be out of here on the street probably. Who's gonna want a freak like you around?"

"Billy! You're hurting me!" I rasp. I hear a rattling sound as the rolling tray nearby trembles. The lights flicker. I tilt my head and the needle on the tray flies in the direction of Billy's hand lodging itself in as the tray falls over.

"Boy, let her go!" I hear a voice, but its distant like a tunnel. "What the hell?"

"What'd I tell you? Freak, you're a fucking freak show..." Billy says, but I hear the shaking in his voice. His grip drops all at once as his hand goes to his other hand.

I can't help it. I start to cry.

"Boy, I think you should go find someone to look at that hand." I look over and notice the owner of the voice. It's Chief Hopper. "Falling onto a tray of medical supplies can be dangerous stuff."

I'm not sure what I expected, but I sure didn't expect Billy to actually leave. I didn't expect the shift of weight on the hospital bed and I didn't expect to be held. "It's okay Kid, it's okay..."

After a while, I feel better and I sit up looking at the man curiously. He hands me a kleenex placing a finger to his nose. I take it and place it on my nose. "That... happen a lot?" He asks.

I'm honestly not sure what he's talking about, Billy or the nosebleed blasts. I give a small shrug.

"That's quite the strong will you have there." He continues.

"Scared..." I reply, my voice soft, apologetic.

He nods. "I get it, these places ain't the greatest. Almost whacked a nurse myself a few times getting fixed up."

I look at him blankly. I don't quite understand what he means. "Scared?"

"Yeah Kid," The Chief looks at me raising a hand. I flinch back, but all he does is rub my hair back. "Want me to stick around?"

I nod.

"Alright then,"

A/N: Next chapter will include all that I mentioned the last chapter as well as Hopper finally acknowledging the strangeness of Eleven's abilities if only to Joyce, Will getting his arm looked at, Will and Eleven meeting for the first time and whatever else decides to throw itself into the mix.

Please do tell me what you think. Also I have a question for you all:

I'm considering ideas for another Stranger Things fic and I have a few ideas. I'd love to know if there is one you'd like to see. Prompts also welcome.

1) My Stepsister the Superhero: A modern day AU where Joyce moved her and the boys to Chicago after leaving Lonnie when Will was in third grade. Joyce remarries to Hopper who is a former Chicago Police Officer with a daughter Jane (Eleven) who is Will's age who is quite odd. After an incident in Chicago, the small family moves back to Hawkins. Meanwhile, Mike Wheeler is a boy who is obsessively following a vigilante superhero. When Will goes missing, Jane must decide whether or not to reveal her secret. (Established Jopper, Jancy, Mileven Lumax)

2) Yet Untitled Stranger Things/ Harry Potter Crossover: AU The party attending Hogwarts. It's the Party's Hogwarts journey as a looming darkness encroaches. Can friendship really overcome a changing world?

3) Stranger Things/Umbrella Academy Crossover: AU: When Five tests his time travel abilities his sister Jane aka Number Eleven comes with but she becomes trapped in the year 1980. Working with the Commission, Five eventually meets his sister again in the year 1983 after being tasked with protecting Joyce Byers, but could this be an impossible task? Canon or semi canon Stranger Things pairings.